

Office of Administrative Hearings

Mission and philosophy

The mission of the Wyoming Office of Administrative Hearings is to serve as a professional, independent and impartial hearing authority in administrative contested cases statewide. The OAH is statutorily charged with providing hearing services to all state agencies. The OAH is uniquely situated to act as an impartial hearing authority because it is a separate operating office with no agency interest in the substantive issues presented in any of the cases it hears. The parties are therefore assured a neutral process that will favor neither side. The OAH encourages and facilitates all efforts made by the parties in timely resolving contested issues through less formal proceedings such as mediations, settlements and other resolutions, while always providing a full contested case hearing when necessary.

Results of outcomes

The OAH is statutorily required to hear most workers' compensation benefits cases, most small claims workers' compensation cases and all actions involving restriction, suspension or cancellation of driving privileges. For these services the OAH is funded from workers' compensation funds and from highway funds. Budget expense organization 0201 (administration) represents the "traditional" program that is responsible for these cases. The FY03 - FY04 biennial appropriation for 0201 was \$1,594,138.

WYO. STAT. ANN. § 9-2-2202 provides that the OAH may furnish hearing services to other state agencies, designated as the "all other" category. The OAH is also statutorily required to hear personnel cases where the parties are unable to agree on a presiding officer. The OAH bills costs of hearing services in "all other" and personnel cases directly to the state agency referring the case. Budget expense organization 0202 (all other) was created in 1998 as a clearing account that is responsible for "all other" and personnel cases referred by other state agencies. The FY03 - FY04 biennial appropriation for 0202 was \$74,477.

When compared with the previous year, the OAH's largest caseload, driver's license, showed an increase of 12 percent in cases referred and showed a slight increase in cases closed during FY03. The workers' compensation case referrals significantly increased by 44 percent over last year. The small claims case referrals dramatically increased by 95 percent more than the previous year. The "all other" case referrals more than doubled both the FY02

General information

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Other locations

Casper, Gillette, Pinedale, Powell and Rock Springs

Year established and reorganized

1987, 1992

Statutory references

Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 9-2-1019(a)
Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 9-2-2201 through 9-2-2203
Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 27-14-602
Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 31-7-105

Number of authorized personnel

Seven full-time, five part-time (under service contracts)

Organization structure

Separate operating agency with no divisions or sections

Clients served

Various state agencies required by law to provide formal hearings, primarily the Department of Employment and the Department of Transportation, along with hearing participants and legal counsel

Budget information

\$ 729,338

and the FY01 caseloads, growing by 132 percent in FY03. The personnel caseload remained about the same as the following charts illustrate:

FY03	Referred	Closed
"All Other"	58	48
Driver's License	979	929
Personnel	7	7
Small Claims	78	75
Workers' Compensation	770	577
FY02		
"All Other"	25	26
Driver's License	872	897
Personnel	6	5
Small Claims	40	42
Workers' Compensation	534	661
FY01		
"All Other"	26	19
Driver's License	861	792
Personnel	2	3
Small Claims	75	73
Workers' Compensation	826	776

Goal 1, Outcome 1.01: The OAH determined the percentage of attorneys surveyed who perceive the dispute resolution process in the OAH to be fair, impartial, expeditious and efficient. Surveys were distributed to attorneys who participated in driver's license and workers' compensation hearings in FY03. No surveys were distributed in the small claims, "all other" or personnel categories since these caseloads reflect such a small percentage of the OAH's entire caseload. The strategic plan projects an 80 percent approval rating.

The OAH received an overall approval rating of 97 percent in the area of being fair and impartial. This 97 percent approval rating exceeds the projected 80 percent by 17 percent.

The same surveys were used to obtain data regarding the OAH's expediency and efficiency. A 94 percent overall approval rating was received in this area and the projected 80 percent has been exceeded by 14 percent.

Goal 1, Outcome 2.01: The OAH calculated the percentage of decisions that are not appealed or that are sustained on appeal. Again the strategic plan projects an 80 percent approval rating.

Exceeding the projected 80 percent by 17 percent, 97 percent of the OAH's decisions were not appealed during FY03.

The percentage of decisions that were sustained on appeal during FY03 was 84 percent, 4 per-

cent greater than the projected 80 percent. These statistics contain district court decisions and supreme court decisions rendered during FY03, regardless of the fiscal year when the OAH decided the cases.

Goal 1, Outcome 3.01: The OAH's strategic plan projects that 100 percent of workers' compensation cases should be closed within 30 days after close of the record. For small claims cases, the OAH should close 100 percent within 75 days of referral.

Of the 577 workers' compensation cases closed in FY03, 551 or 95 percent were closed within 30 days after close of the record. A shortfall of only 5 percent results in this category from the strategic plan projection of 100 percent.

Of the 75 small claims cases closed during FY03, 61 cases or 81 percent were closed within 75 days of referral. A shortfall of 19 percent results in this category from the strategic plan projection of 100 percent. These statistics do not give an accurate picture of the speedy handling of small claims cases. The statutory limit of 75 days does not take into account continuances granted at the request of the parties and also fails to take into account the delay in receiving cases from the workers' compensation division that averaged nine days per case during FY03.

Goal 1, Outcome 4.01: The OAH determined the percentages of "all other", personnel and driver's license cases where a final order or recommended decision, as appropriate, was issued: first within 60 days after close of the record; and second within 120 days after close of the record.

Of the 58 "all other" cases closed in FY03, 100 percent were closed within the projected 60 days after close of the record. The first strategic plan projection of 80 percent closed within 60 days after close of the record has been exceeded by 20 percent. The second projection of 100 percent closed within 120 days after close of the record has been met.

Of the seven personnel cases that closed in FY03, 100 percent were closed within the projected 60 days after close of the record. The first projection of 80 percent closed within 60 days after close of the record has been exceeded by 20 percent. The second projection of 100 percent closed within 120 days after close of the record has been met.

Of the 929 driver's license cases closed in FY03, 99 percent or 927 cases were closed within 60 days after close of the record, exceeding the projected 80 percent by 19 percent. All but one, or 99 percent, of the driver's license cases closed in FY03 were closed within 120 days after close of the record, falling just 1 percent short of the 100 percent projection.

Goal 2, Outcome 1.01 - The OAH tracked the number of management services and internal operation function tasks completed improperly or late. No tasks were found to be improperly completed or late.

Strategic plan changes

Minor changes were made to the strategic plan to reflect the continuing evolution of the Wyoming Office of Administrative Hearings.

Office of Administrative Hearings organization chart

